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Transmittal of Report IP-301 entitled: "Radio Listener Potential in China".

REFERENCE: Your Project Initiation Memorandum dated 16 May 1952, Project: IP-301, OPC (RQM/OIS) (Case K-8138).

Attached are an original and two copies of the Report in fulfillment of the referenced Project Initiation Memorandum.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Internal Project

IP-301
(OPC EQM/OIS) (Case K-8138)

RADIO LISTENER POTENTIAL IN CHINA,

with specific reference to the effectiveness of police controls against listening to foreign broadcasts and to regulations and practices concerning confiscation or registration of citizens' radio receivers.

26 May 1952

Note

This document is a working paper. It is based exclusively upon collateral source material immediately available in the preparing office as of 16 May 1952. No finished intelligence material appeared among the source items. Hence, the document was developed essentially from fragmentary raw material. The material used covers the period from 1949 to date, with the majority relating to the year 1951. The data and the observations contained herein do not necessarily represent the final position of ORR and, in the light of the time and material factors, should be regarded as provisional only.

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RADIO LISTENER POTENTIAL IN CHINA

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Numerical footnote references appearing in the text relate to pertinent source material, as listed numerically in the Appendix.

Summary.

The Communist China domestic radiobroadcasting base appears inadequate to provide a good nation-wide service. Populated areas remote from the 52 cities offering medium-frequency service must seemingly depend upon the few less-satisfactory high-frequency (short wave) stations. Part of this deficiency may be overcome by landline networks, though those networks do not appear to be at all extensive. The reception facilities were estimated to comprise some 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 units, consisting of radio receivers and probably a relatively small number of separate loudspeakers. The standard of four listeners per receiver probably does not apply for China as the factor of group listening is not taken into consideration in determining this standard. Most of the radio receivers probably covered the medium-frequency band (about 550 to 1500 kilocycles). From 30,000 to 200,000 were estimated to be capable of high-frequency reception. Of the total number some 200,000 radio receivers were said to be in need of repair or reconditioning in 1950. Total figures do not include unreported clandestine sets, nor thousands of so-called "commercial" and military radio receiving equipments undoubtedly employed in radio services other than radiobroadcasting, but which could be officially or unofficially used from time to time for radiobroadcast listening. Most of the receivers were said to be located in the eastern portion of the country mainly along the coastal regions and concentrated in and near the larger cities. Increasing numbers of radio receivers seem to be employed at monitoring posts and listening stations for direct or indirect public, group listening at various institutions and villages which had had little if any radiobroadcast service at all. The source of these receivers is obscure. Contribution and confiscation of private receivers may account for some of them. Private sets were thought to belong mainly to Chinese professional and business people and foreigners.

To solidify the country the Communist Regime organized for "thought control," propaganda, and educational campaigns on a nation-wide basis. Radiobroadcasting was one of the tools. Control of program content and of listening would follow naturally.

Technical, social, economic, and political considerations were affecting listener potential. Technically the facilities, by Western standards, are wanting. Socially, the large majority of the populace could not afford radio receivers, hence the apparent trend toward group listening with its psychological and security advantages. Economically, the low productive level of the country forced dependence upon imports of radio equipment. Though many sets were said to have worn out, sets were reported as available for purchase on the open market. Politically, localized persuasion and coercion have been employed to control listening and listening facilities, principally to foreign high-frequency transmissions. Among these were insinuation, regulation, registration and confiscation of receivers, removal of high-frequency elements, and arrest, with fear permeating the whole atmosphere.

The dimensions of the radio listener potential in Communist China are obviously varied and complex. They range from the number and technical characteristics of the receiving facilities to answers to the questions who listens to what?, when?, where?, how?, why?, and under what conditions? Based on 1950-51 data, Communist China is thought to have about 4 sets per thousand inhabitants as against about 10 for the whole of Asia, 75 for the world, 108 for Europe, and some 620 for the United States. For high-frequency receivers the figure comes to about one set per 1600 inhabitants in China, even if all sets were in private, uncontrolled hands. As to the other dimensions, the text gives some hints. They suggest that the foreign broadcast listening potential is low and apparently is becoming lower. One big unanswerable question is the magnitude and nature of clandestine listening and its supporting grapevine.

I. Radiobroadcasting Facilities.

1. Transmission Facilities.

As of March 1952, Communist China was believed to be operating, under Communist Government control, one or more radiobroadcasting transmitters in some 54 cities. Reports place the total number of transmitters as about 90. All but two of these cities were providing service in the medium-frequency (medium-wave) band, that is, between 550 and 1500 kilocycles. Two cities were offering high-frequency (short-wave) service only. Eleven cities gave both medium- and high-frequency service. Apparently frequencies below 550 kilocycles were not used by Communist China for radiobroadcasting service. 1/, 2/, 3/ According to official international records of 1950, the power of these stations ranged from 50 watts to as much as 100 kilowatts. Most of the transmitters, however, were apparently 5 kilowatts or less. Only three cities, Changchun, Nanking, and Peiping were listed for 100 kilowatts operation (on medium frequencies).3/ It is not known whether these 100-kilowatt transmitters are actually in operation. One June 1950 report mentions the construction of a 500-kilowatt station.26/

The radiobroadcasting facilities were generally concentrated in the eastern half of the country. Only a few were operating in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the country. As might be expected the more important cities had more facilities, with more power, and used more frequencies than did the smaller cities. Peiping headed the list, offering international, home, and regional services. In addition to regional service, Chungking provided a high-frequency service to southwest China, Hankow to Central-south China, Mukden to Northwest China, Shanghai to East China and Formosa, and Sian to Northwest China. Several other stations gave high-frequency service to smaller segments of the country. Current information shows that "private" radiobroadcasting service apparently persists under the Communist Regime, with 18 private operators in Shanghai and 3 at Canton.4/ One report for 1950 shows that 33 private stations were in operation, 22 at Shanghai, 3 at Canton, 3 at Chungking, 2 at Ning-po, and one each at Peiping, Tientsin, and Tsingtao.5/

In view of the size of the country, the number of transmitter locations, their frequencies and power, and the paucity of land-line facilities, it appears that many populated areas remote from cities giving medium-frequency service must depend upon the less satisfactory high-frequency stations for domestic radiobroadcasting service. The extent to which landline transmission, if any, mitigates this condition is not known. Neither is it known whether any appreciable number of relatively low-powered, local transmitters are employed in areas remote

from good radiobroadcast reception. Apart from program-hour and language considerations, it does not seem from cursory examination of data on hand that the Communist China radiobroadcasting transmission base was sufficient to provide a good nation-wide service.

2. Reception Facilities.

Physical reception facilities comprised radio receivers and loudspeakers. They might be used separately or together. A radio receiver might be used with a single built-in or external loudspeaker. It might be used with or without an amplifier for the distribution of radiobroadcasts over wire lines to one or more local or remote loudspeakers. Loudspeakers might also be connected by wire line directly to the microphone in a radiobroadcasting studio without the intermediation of a radio-medium transmission link and hence of a radio receiver. Nothing is known of the possible use of radiobroadcast recordings to supplement direct reception or, by the distribution of recordings, to provide an indirect radiobroadcast service to those localities without direct radio reception facilities. Word-of-mouth distribution of radiobroadcast material, in which a listener passes the word on to another who has not heard, might, in fact, represent a significant mass medium of indirect radiobroadcasting communication in Communist China, though its magnitude cannot now be measured.

As to the number, kind, location, and use of physical reception facilities, the political, military, social, and economic upheavals in China over the past 15 or more years preclude the development of reliable statistical series.

On the basis of numerous scattered source material from 1936 on, it is estimated that the number of radiobroadcast receivers in Communist China is now somewhere between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 units. The number of unreported clandestine receivers is not known. The number of loudspeakers included in the number of "receivers" is not known, but it thought to be relatively small. There is no information at hand on the number of wire distribution networks in operation. It is likely that most if not all of the radio receivers cover the medium-frequency band and that few, if any, cover the low-frequency band. Estimates of the number of radio receivers equipped for high-frequency reception and included in the overall figures above range from 20,000 to 200,000 units. One source reported that in 1950 some 200,000 radio receivers were in need of repair or reconditioning. 5/, 6/ 7/, 8/, 9/, 10/, 11/, 12/, 13/, 14/, 15/, 16/, 17/, 18/, 19/, 20/.

Apart from radiobroadcast receivers as such, there are probably many thousands of radio receivers employed in other radio services by the military, the government, civil activities for the conduct of point-to-point, aeronautical, maritime, and other communications. In general such commercial-type receivers are likely to be of a higher quality, and contain wider frequency tuning ranges than do those designed specifically for radiobroadcast reception. The users (at least the operators) of these receivers are potential listeners to radiobroadcasts as well as to other transmissions not related to their specialized communication mission. Generally headphones are employed with such receivers in many such radio communication services and thus lend themselves more readily to clandestine listening.

On the basis of an estimated 1,000,000 to 1,100,000 receivers in the whole country in 1950, one report states that from 350,000 to 400,000 are located in Northeast and East China, 200,000 in North China (mainly Peiping and Tientsin) and the remainder elsewhere.[17] Another report for 1951 places the number of receivers in Central and South China at 100,000. Of these, 99,000 were said to be concentrated in principal cities, and Canton, Swatow, and Chiang-men between them had two-thirds of that number. Of the 100,000 in Central and South China, 20,000 of them were reported as being organized by the government to monitor programs apparently in connection with public group listening.[21] In December, 1951, it was reported that Chinese Communist technicians had gone to Korea with 1,000 radio receivers to set up a monitoring service network, apparently to provide public, group listening to selected radiobroadcasts.[22]

Radiobroadcast receivers in Communist China are apparently being used in two principal ways. Increasing numbers of radio receivers are being used to set up public, group-listening stations and monitoring posts. The listening stations are set up to serve factories, newspaper offices, schools, institutions, military units, social organizations, and for other social and economic groups. The source of these receivers is obscure, but some may represent contributions or confiscations of private sets. Such stations may comprise a radio receiver and but one loudspeaker, or, the output of the receiver may, with or without amplification, over a wire network, be distributed to numerous loudspeakers located in the general area. It is not believed that many extensive wire distribution networks are yet in service. A monitoring post consists of a radio receiver and reporter. The reporter records the news dictated slowly by the radiobroadcasting transmitter station. This news is then distributed to the local populace. It is likely that the monitoring-post radio receiver is also available for general group listening. From numerous reports, it looks as though

/these facilities are

being established by the tens of thousands all over China in large numbers of villages and towns many of which had not previously had any radio-broadcasting service whatever. 9/, 16/, 17/, 19/, 23/, 24/, 25/, 26/, 27/, 28/, 29/, 30/, 31/, 33/.

The second principal way is so-called "private" use of radio receivers. It was reported in 1946 that "before the war" there were about 1,000,000 radio sets in China. Most of them belonged to foreigners in the prosperous commercial cities. Hardly more than 1,000 sets belonged to the Chinese living outside the coastal provinces. They were chiefly American, English, Dutch, and German makes and cost from 60 to 100 dollars. It was said that the Japanese confiscated most of them and in turn brought with them sets worth about 25 dollars. The latter had three or four tubes and covered the medium-frequency band only. In 1950 half the number of sets in China were said to be Japanese-made. Only a very small part of the total number of sets are owned or enjoyed by the working class. Many private sets said to be in the hands of military personnel are those confiscated from the public since "liberation." Though the number of sets still remaining in private hands is not known, some 80,000 may still be in private use in the Central and South China region. 8/, 16/, 21/ No information at all is available as to the use of the relatively insensitive crystal receiver and scant mention is made of battery-operated radio receivers for those towns and villages without electric power. 9/

II. Pertinent Objectives of the Communist Regime.

1. General.

To achieve political stability and control over the masses, it is reported that the Communist regime operates three basic departments. The Social Affairs Department of the Communist Party overrides the other two, the Self-Defense Department of the Political Department of the army and the Public Security Department. Apparently the Self-Defense Department carries out surveillance and control of army personnel. The Public Safety Department has assigned to it the task of controlling the masses.

The Public Safety Department operates subordinate organizational sub-divisions in all governmental areas. Sub-divisions operate in and through administrative or military control areas, provinces, sub-provincial areas, districts, sub-districts, and villages. At the city or village level, the population seems to be grouped into teams over which a public security unit or committee exercises control and surveillance. Apparently, public safety functions also permeate political, professional, social, and economic institutional groupings.

Toward achieving control of the masses, it is said that every possible means is employed, political, military, and economic. Among the functions performed by the public safety organizations is census-taking, control of the movements of the population, and general surveillance. Among other powers, the organization is reported to have power to eliminate anti-Communists and pro-Nationalists and to handle violations of the law. 32/, 34/, 35/.

To solidify the country the Communist Regime appears to operate a nation-wide "thought reform," propaganda, and educational system with tentacles down into the villages. Available data does not make it clear precisely how this system is set up organizationally. As a tool and a medium of this system, radio seems to have been, in 1950, an interest of the General Office of Information, the Bureau of Radio and Broadcasting, the News Administration, and possibly the Government Press Administration. All of these agencies are probably associated with the central government in Peiping. 17/, 19/, 23/, 28/, 35/, 37/, 38/, 40/

2. Radiobroadcasting.

The propaganda and educational functions are reflected in the organization and use of radiobroadcasting. Radiobroadcast transmission is centrally organized into a nation-wide network with Peiping as the main, central station. Regional and local stations retransmit in part Peiping transmissions, and in part originate their own programs. Program content is controlled all along the line. Reception facilities in part are organized on a nation-wide basis into public, group-listening and monitoring points. Additionally, private facilities are still in use, either radio receivers or loudspeakers. 16/, 17/

A unique feature of the Communist China broadcasting service, objectives is the employment of the service to disseminate press to villages which hitherto apparently had no rapid news service whatever, and reportedly to many institutions where groups gather, in cities as well as villages. This revolutionary technique is intended to bring each individual within reach of the Communists' expanding propaganda program. Press material is radiobroadcast at dictation speed to "monitoring" and "listening" posts and is taken down by trained reporters or "monitors." They then distribute the material by word of mouth or by printed sheet. The reporters or "monitors" seem to have responsibilities for organizing their respective audiences and readers. It is likely that this technique was partly necessitated by the inadequacy of transport, of land-line and point-to-point radio facilities, and of communication equipment. However, the security and psychological advantages of collective listening and instruction may well over-ride all other considerations. 16/, 17/, 19/, 23/, 25/, 27/, 28/, 29/, 30/, 32/, 36/, 39/

III. Influences Affecting Listener Potential.

Influences affecting listener potential in Communist China fall into four major categories: Technical, social, economic, and political. They are treated separately here.

1. Technical.

Technically, the Communist China radiobroadcasting transmission base in terms of the number of transmitter points, their location, their power, and the frequency bands in which the transmitters operate is believed inadequate to provide a good signal in all points in China. Since the large majority of the transmitting stations operate in the medium-frequency band, service is probably satisfactory in the general area of the transmitting station. The size of the daytime area depends mainly upon the power of the transmitter, and may range from 10 to 100 or more miles in radius. Nighttime service extends to greater distances, but the quality of the service is likely to be adversely affected by sky-wave interference. High-frequency stations may more or less cover the country with a signal of varying but generally useful quality depending mainly upon the order of high-frequencies employed with respect to time of day and desired area coverage.

Low-, medium-, and high-frequency transmissions from foreign countries could also more or less cover the country. The low- and medium-frequency transmissions would, however, have to emanate from points relatively closer to the China mainland than high-frequency transmissions. In any event, it is unlikely that foreign low- and medium-frequency transmissions could deliver a useful signal into the mammouth interior.

These conditions of signal distribution influence the character of the reception facilities. For areas contiguous to medium-frequency transmitting stations relatively simple, inexpensive radio receivers may be employed, even cheap crystal sets (though not mentioned in any source material) at points close to transmitting stations. For more remote areas, radio tube-receivers with at least one high-frequency band would be necessary, though in some areas two or more such bands appear to be necessary for continuous service. However, reports indicate that in many parts of the country high-frequency band components were being removed from receivers. Loudspeaker service is available, but mainly in the cities where wire-line facilities are more apt to be available. It is unlikely that sufficient trunk-line wire-line facilities are yet available for carrying radiobroadcast programs into all distant remote areas to provide service without the local employment of radio receivers.[40], [41], [42], [43]

The coverage of electric power service tends to affect the kind of reception facilities. Where electric power is available, power-driven reception facilities must be designed to match that power, otherwise additional technical equipment becomes necessary. In other words, any set, foreign or domestic, will not operate generally on any kind of electric power. Reported lack of power in many places and restrictions on the use of power for radio receivers in others, generally mean that crystal or battery radio receivers are necessary. Batteries must, of necessity, be replaced from time to time. 44/, 53/

Effective jamming (deliberate creation of interference) by Communist stations of foreign Chinese language broadcasts as indicated in one report, tends to deprive the set owners in the effectively jammed areas of the full capabilities of his radio set. 45/, 55/

2. Social.

The general concept of collective or group activity under appropriate surveillance apparently applies to radiobroadcast listening. The application of this concept seems to stand on its own psychological and security merits and, apart from any technical or economic shortcomings in the radiobroadcasting service itself. As already indicated thousands of "monitoring" and listening posts are being set up for the purpose of collective or group propagandization and education. One late 1951 report reveals that private radio receiver owners have been asked to contribute their sets for group listening purposes. Other reports for 1950 and 1951 show that private set owners were required to use their sets outside their homes or in their doorways so that others may listen (probably including members of the police). 18/, 19/, 28/, 29/, 35/, 36/

As to the social status of set owners, it is generally reported that relatively few Chinese people could afford to own a radio receiver, and then usually the less luxurious single band, medium-frequency set. Only foreigners and business and professional natives could afford the luxury of the more expensive sets which included components permitting high-frequency reception. 13/, 44/, 47/, 48/, 49/, 50/

3. Economic.

Source material for 1950-1952 shows that a supply of radio receiving sets existed. One report for mid-1950, based on Peiping, Canton, and Hong Kong newspapers, stated that five factories operating under the management of the Radio Broadcasting Bureau were able to produce 20,000 radio receiving sets per year, provided that raw materials were available and that the plants were operated at full capacity. One secret document for April 1952 states that it was reported that Communist China representatives were negotiating with East Germany for the "delivery of 25 radio factories capable of producing small radio sets, designed to receive Radio Moscow and Radio Peiping", /suggests sets with one or more high-frequency bands/ valued at about 25,000,000 rubles. The report continues that deliveries to China were halted for the time being because payments to East Germany were 50,000,000 rubles in arrears. 4/ 51/

No data turned up on exports and little on imports. One report for January 1950 stated that Soviet and old Japanese radio receivers were available for purchase in Harbin. Another report originating with Reuters in Hong Kong in April 1952 said that "Russian-made wireless and radio sets have made their appearance in Canton, according to China mainland reports. The sets were described as ideal for 'family or club use' and 'nice' in appearance". But a third report for 1949-1951 relates that "no evidence exists that Russia or the Satellite nations have shipped radio sets for civilian consumption since the Chinese Communists overran the mainland". 44/ 49/ 52/

As to the supply of radio receiving sets for purchase on the open market, reports show that sets were purchasable in Harbin in October 1950, in Wusih in March 1951, in Tientsin in May 1951, in Soochow and Ch'ang-shu in July 1951, and in China (probably Chungking) in November 1951. 43/ 45/ 47/ 49/ 50/ 53/ But high-frequency sets were said to be difficult to obtain. The demand for these sets was reported as low, principally because they were so expensive that only a small percentage of the Chinese could afford them. 45/ 47/ 48/ 49/ 50/ As to radio set parts information is in conflict. It was indicated on page 4 that some 200,000 sets in China were in need of repair in 1950. For the same period another report mentions that parts were plentiful but too expensive for most people to buy, while a second report indicated that most sets in Shanghai were obsolete and worn-out tubes were impossible to replace. 44/ 50/

4. Political.

The political approach to radiobroadcasting listener control in Communist China seems to be both persuasive and coercive. Available data do not reveal the existence of specific Communist national mandates covering in detail the behavior pattern to be followed by radiobroadcast

receiver owners in China. While there seems to be some formalized regulations, certain "desires" of the regime appear to take the form of "suggestions" rather than mandates. Hence, for convenience, the political aspects of control of listening and listening facilities will be treated under Insinuation, Regulation, Registration, Confiscation, and Enforcement and Police Controls.

a. Insinuation.

In the source material on hand, the first insinuation as to how higher echelons of the regime looked upon high-frequency listening is the reported requisitioning of all high-frequency receivers simultaneously in Shanghai, Nanking, Hankow, and Canton beginning on April 1, 1950. At the same time stores were prohibited from listening to high-frequency broadcasts. The wording of the report implied that this requisitioning was not nation-wide. On June 10, 1950, the Kwantung Province People's Government issued the text of a directive outlining a national plan to carry the voices of the Communist leaders into the hitherto most isolated of China's villages. The plan entailed the "mobilization" of radio receivers in every county, but does not make clear whose receivers and under what conditions. In connection with the fulfillment of this directive in Kwantung Province, however, each county was directed to report to the Canton radiobroadcasting station detailed information on the types of receivers available locally, and the availability of batteries, tubes, and repairmen. In July of the same year, the local Communist authorities in the Tung Chiang area were reported to have ordered that all radio receiving sets be confiscated. Yet in October 1950 listening was reported as having been unrestricted in Harbin and Tientsin, but in a later report the same source stated that in Harbin it was permissible to own only receivers covering the medium-frequency band and in Tientsin is was legal to own high-frequency receivers, but was illegal to listen to Western broadcasts. A report out of Hong Kong on November 13, 1950, concerning the first officially reported case of a Chinese having been arrested and punished in Shanghai for using a high-frequency receiver to pick up foreign broadcasts, observed that "although the Communist authorities had banned private possession of radio transmitting apparatus, there were no previous official restrictions on the use of short-wave receivers to pick up foreign broadcasts". 4/ 19/ 28/ 36/ 42/ 49/ 53/ 54/ 55/

In seventeen items of source material for the year 1951 no mention is made of the existence of any nation-wide mandate or decree prohibiting listening on high-frequencies or to foreign radiobroadcasts. One reliable source relates that in 1950 the Yanching School of Journalism had requested the government to declare Voice of America listening illegal, "but the government stated that such a regulation was unnecessary for patriotic Chinese". 50/ Most of the material does, however,

indicate that listening to foreign stations was "dangerous", "unpatriotic", "imprudent", or "risky". No unofficial control trends during the year are discernible. One report states that the Chinese in Harbin were not permitted to possess high-frequency receivers. Reports on Shanghai may be in conflict. An early 1951 report states that in Shanghai no one was permitted to own a high-frequency receiver or to listen to high-frequency radiobroadcasts. Several reports covering the remainder of the year seem to reveal the contrary, that generally high-frequency receivers were allowed there but set owners were "advised" not to listen to VOA.

From the above it would seem that either a nation-wide Peiping decree is non-existent or one does exist but has purposely not been publicized. It is conjectured that perhaps "anti-state" listening is one way for the police functionaries to track down those whose sympathies are not altogether "pure". This technique was said to be used in connection with the censorship of mail and telegrams in Shih-ch'i, Kwantung. 24/ This apparent lack of announced dicta on the subject probably explains the reported varied practices prevailing in many parts of China, as will be seen later.

b. Regulation.

Localized "regulations" and controls appear to be in force. They vary from area to area and the character and degree of enforcement does not appear to be uniform. The wordage of only one formalized regulation was found among the source material. In December 1950 the Canton Public Security Bureau began issuing certificates to owners of radio sets bearing the following warning:

"1. This certificate must be shown when purchasing radio parts or repairing the set.

2. Change of address must be reported to the bureau for correction on the certificate.

3. Moving a radio set out of Canton will be allowed only after approval by the bureau.

4. The certificate must be renewed when ownership changes.

5. The certificate must be returned to the bureau when the set is discarded."

Apparently these certificates were allegedly issued at the time sets were registered and high-frequency components, if any, removed therefrom. 25/

On a localized basis the label "regulation" or "measure" was associated with a number of practices. In mid-1950 residences in Chaoch'ing having receiving sets were required to install them in doorways ostensibly so that passersby could hear them. In Ch'eng-shu in mid-1951 radios had to be placed on the outside of houses so that others could also hear, but "obviously to prevent the owners from listening to illegal programs". [45] [46] In November 1951, a missionary departing overseas from Tsingtao was not permitted to take his radio receiver with him. [47] Another missionary departing overseas from Wuhih in March 1951 had to obtain written permission from the police to sell her set to a Chinese native. [48] As previously mentioned, unspecified Communist authorities "proclaimed" the requisitioning of all high-frequency receivers simultaneously in Shanghai, Nanking, Hankow, and Canton beginning April 1, 1950, and at the same time prohibited stores from listening to all high-frequency broadcasting. [49] The regulatory implications of the registration and confiscation of radio receivers, enforcement practices, and police controls are treated below.

c. Registration.

Seven items of source material spread over the period 1950-1951 stated that registration of radio receivers was required by local authorities in Shanghai, Tsingtao, Canton, Suchow, Soochow, Ch'eng-shu, Yanching, and Chao-ch'ing. In Canton registration was implemented under Public Security Order No. 53 issued in December 1950. [25] [21] [42] [43] [15] [42] [22] It was not until January 1952, however, that the Canton local municipal government imposed registration upon radio transmitting equipment. Tsingtao and Hankow had begun registration of wireless telegraph and telephone transmitters and receivers, and parts in January 1951. [28] [29]

d. Confiscation.

Fewer reports are available on the confiscation of radio receivers than on registration. On July 15, 1950, it was reported that, since the outbreak of the Korean war, local authorities in the Tung Chiang area had ordered that all radio receiving sets be confiscated. [4] Another report for March 1951 tells that the Kwantung Party authorities had begun confiscating all radio sets owned by people in rural areas, but allowing residents in cities to retain theirs. This report also says that in several hsiens on the outskirts of Canton, the Kwantung Provincial Government had approved the confiscation of all battery-operated radio sets owned by the farmers to prevent listening to VOA and the Voice of Taiwan. [44] In Tientsin all commercial-type radio sets had been confiscated by June 1951. [50] Another reliable source from China avers that as of November 1951 he did not know of any Chinese whose radio was confiscated and that the government seized all those belonging to foreigners.

except Russians, but encouraged ownership among the Chinese themselves. 50/

e. Enforcement and Police Controls.

The identification of the relationships between enforcement and police controls and the laws, decrees, edicts of the Communist regime under which those powers are exercised is obscure. Enforcement and control do not seem to be necessarily related to any specific authorization. Several reports mentioned arrests and "dangers". In Kwantung, in July 1950, it was reported that those who do not comply with the order that all radio receiving sets be confiscated face prison sentences of 5 to 15 years. 51/ Another report for the same period relates that in Chao-ch'ing Communist authorities have "enforced measures" to prevent foreign listening, using plainclothesmen to listen to street conversations and to what people were listening to on their radio receivers. 52/ A Hong Kong press dispatch of November 13, 1950, claims that the officially reported case of a Chinese having been arrested and punished in connection with VOA broadcasts was the first instance on record. 53/ In Kweiyang and Chungking in December 1950, a number of Chinese were said to have been shot for listening to VOA. 54/ One [redacted] report for early 1951 said that in consequence of arrests of reactionaries, the number of people listening to foreign stations has gone down, "even though the threatened registration of radio sets had not yet been carried out". 55/ In Wuchih in April 1951, government "snoopers" arrested and questioned at length those heard discussing foreign broadcast information, "thus making it extremely dangerous to receive foreign stations". 56/

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As of October 1951, another report from a source who had lived in Shanghai said that "although the VOA is heard in China, there is little /less/ international news reaching the people as /than/ six months ago. The Chinese Communists are making it increasingly dangerous to own or listen to a radio". It does not state what is meant by "dangerous". 57/ A good source who left China in November of last year stated that "not only the police, but every category of organization has watchers who will report anyone suspected of listening to foreign broadcasts". He did not say what eventuates from the report. 58/ Another good source who left Shanghai in mid-December 1951 said that there has been no official interference with listening to the radio, but no Chinese will admit to listening to VOA as they consider it too dangerous. The source did not know whether the fear was the result of any official warning or of innate Chinese prudence. 59/

IV. Commentary on Radio Listener Potential.

The dimensions of the radio listener potential in Communist China are obviously varied and complex. They range from the number of receiving

facilities, the technical features of those facilities, their location with respect to transmitting stations and their transmitting frequencies, who operates them, when they are operated, how they are operated and under what conditions, how well the facilities are maintained, what program selections are made, to the extent to which what is heard is passed on to others.

Based on the maximum figure of 1,500,000 radio receivers in Communist China, the number of sets per 1000 inhabitants in 1950-1951 comes to about 4 sets, against about 10 for the whole of Asia, 75 for the world, 108 for Europe, and some 620 for the United States. [64] The accepted standard of 4 listeners per receiver probably does not hold for China, as the factor of group listening is not included in that standard. By comparison China's base is quite poor, even for domestic service or for service from foreign stations near her borders. For service from distant foreign stations using high-frequencies, China's base, using the estimated maximum number of high-frequency receivers of 200,000 units, comes to about one set per 1600 inhabitants, even if all of them were in private, uncontrolled hands.

No approximations can be made on the other dimensions enumerated. Some hints are given throughout the Report. They suggest that the foreign broadcast listening potential is low and apparently becoming lower in consequence of the imposition of direct and indirect controls by the hierarchy. But the big unanswerable question is the extent of clandestine listening in terms of equipment, willingness of such listeners to take risks, and the magnitude and effectiveness of a grapevine.

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